



NAVY NEWS



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Forward ... from the Sea

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Nancy Reagan christens Navy's newest carrier

By Journalist 2nd Class Roy C. Padrick, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic public affairs

NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) — Ronald Wilson Reagan last spoke to the American public as president more than 12 years ago. By his side then was Nancy Davis Reagan. The former first lady has forever since stood by the actor she married March 4, 1952.

On March 4, exactly 49 years after the two actors said their vows, she christened the world's most sophisticated Navy vessel, the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *Ronald W. Reagan* (CVN 76).

The former president was not present at the christening of his namesake ship, but Mrs. Reagan said she knew he was honored and humbled. In her modest voice, she broke through the cold and rain of the afternoon and told the audience, "I know he would be very proud of this ship and her crew. God bless you all and thank you for letting me be a part of it."

President George W. Bush spoke to the more than 10,000 guests in attendance just before the former first lady carried out the christening tradition on the Navy's newest nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. He spoke of Reagan's legacy as a president and world leader, and more importantly, of his visions for the future.

"As president, Ronald Reagan believed without question that tyranny is temporary, and the hope of freedom is universal and permanent, and that our nation has unique goodness and must remain uniquely strong," Bush said. "Some achievements remain with us for years, while Reagan's achievements grow larger with the passing of time."

Bush also spoke of the differences in the world between Reagan's tenure as commander-in-chief and his own.

"Our present dangers are less concentrated and more varied," he said. "They come from rogue nations and terrorism, where missiles threaten our forces, our friends, our allies and our homeland. As we dedicate this ship, I want to rededicate American policy to model Reagan's vision of optimism, modesty and



Former First Lady Nancy Reagan smashes a bottle of champagne on the bow of USS *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) as President George W. Bush and Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Newport News Shipbuilding William P. Frickes observe. Photo by Photographer's Mate 1st Class Johnny Bivera

results."

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld echoed the sentiment by saying the military today, "faces new challenges each and every day. We must continually meet those challenges and be ever ready for more dangers as they come along."

Rumsfeld also spoke of the resolution of the new president to his military, saying, "Peace is not ordained, it is earned ... It is a voyage we must turn."

Robert B. Pirie Jr., acting secretary of the Navy, said "The aircraft carrier symbolizes power and strength just as Ronald Reagan did when he was president. I believe the pre-commissioning unit of CVN 76 has already drafted that strength and warmth and vision of Ronald Reagan."

Also on hand were Secretary of State Colin Powell, Virginia Gov. James Gilmore III, Sen. John Warner (R-Va.), Sen. George Allen (R-Va.) and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Vern Clark. Many congressmen and local and national military and civic leaders were present at the christening.

Ronald Reagan will join the fleet in 2003 as the 9th Nimitz-class nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. The ship is 1,092 feet long with a 4.5-acre flight deck. The superstructure rises more than 20 stories above the waterline, and the ship will displace about 90,000 tons when fully loaded.

Throughout the ceremony, Nancy Reagan could be seen looking up at the giant portrait of her husband on the bow of the carrier holding strong against the winds that rose and fell like the applause. Her face showed the gamut of emotions and, perhaps most visible, was the smile as she stepped up to the bow of the towering ship.

Escorted by Bush, Reagan took the ceremonial bottle in hand and looked up at Ronald's approving face. And in an instant, with the spilling of champagne and the thunder of applause, the vessel of war was officially named *Ronald W. Reagan*.

More information about Pre-commissioning Unit *Ronald Reagan* can be found at <http://www.reagan.navy.mil>.

U.S. service members attend Kuwait POW memorial opening as part of Gulf War 10th anniversary

By Chief Journalist(SW) Douglas H. Stutz, Joint Task Force Southwest Asia public affairs

KUWAIT CITY, Kuwait (NNS) — Against the backdrop of Kuwait's 10th anniversary of the end of the Gulf War, soldiers, Sailors, airmen and Marines of the U.S. and coalition force allies were present to commemorate the event. On the evening of Feb. 25, service members were sprinkled throughout a much-appreciative audience to see and hear former President George Bush (1989-93), and former British Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher (1979-90) and John Major (1990-97) address the Gulf nation on such an auspicious occasion. The honored guests also included Secretary of State Colin Powell and retired U.S. Army Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf.

The event was a milestone for Kuwait because it provided the small, oil-rich Persian Gulf emirate the opportunity to not only celebrate the 40th anniversary of independence from Britain, but also commemorate and mark the 10th anniversary of the liberation of their land from Iraq.

This is the first time Kuwait has held official celebrations to denote the anniversary of defeating Iraq. Despite the festive fireworks in the distance, the allied victory was touched upon on a much more somber note. Bush, Thatcher, Major and the other respected guests were given the honor of unveiling Kuwait's Martyr and POW Memorial Wall, paying tribute to the more than 600 Kuwaitis and others still missing from the war with Iraq. Kuwait has accused Iraq of holding them as prisoners, a claim which Iraq has repeatedly denied.

"This is an emotional event for all of us," commented Bush. "Certainly, Kuwait has not forgotten about those fallen in battle, those still missing in action and those who are still prisoners of war. America hasn't forgotten either. Saddam Hussein has done nothing. America will also never forget our obligation to the freedom of Kuwait."

Iraqi troops invaded and occupied Kuwait in August 1990 and were forcibly removed by a broad range coalition of Western and Arab nations in February 1991.



Drummers with the U.S. Air Force Heritage of America Band perform during opening ceremonies for the Desert Storm 10th Anniversary.
U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Greg L. Davis

Since then, Iraq has maintained huge military forces across the common border, with two divisions of troops just a 20-minute drive from Kuwait. Iraq has continued to flaunt U.N. resolutions and diplomatic overtures. Saddam Hussein's oldest son, Uday, has demanded that the official map of Iraq be redrawn with Kuwait a part of it.

The continued aggressive action by Iraq, which fired over 40 anti-aircraft artillery and surface-to-air missiles at Operation Southern Watch Coalition Force aircraft in January alone, culminated with a recent air strike against military targets in and around Baghdad.

"As a country that has had to fight to restore freedom more than once under my time as prime minister, I know that there is no amount of force a dictatorship can use that can destroy the spirit of a free people," exclaimed Thatcher. "We will ensure the same freedom and security of Kuwait in the future as we do in the present and had to do in the past. We also owe it to our armed forces that they are supplied with the right equipment and most up-to-date technology to achieve victory against any threat in the

shortest amount of time."

There are approximately 4,500 U.S. troops stationed in Kuwait, together with squadrons of U.S. and British warplanes that regularly patrol the skies over southern Iraq.

"There are scars that remain well after the end of the Gulf War," said Major. "There are many mothers and families who still do not know the fate of those still missing. They are the true casualties of war. Tonight, we remember. For them and all of us, we must continue to be vigilant, especially for the future and safety of Kuwait."

The somber flag raising and unveiling was a humble and proud moment for the entire gathering. It wasn't until Schwarzkopf lingered after the end of the official portion of the evening did the heart-felt camaraderie return to the crowd. The commander general of the coalition forces during the Gulf War found himself in his element mingling with American service personnel. Just as they did 10 years ago in the small Gulf nation, American soldiers, Sailors, airmen and Marines again rallied to join the man that led them to victory.

Earthquake rocks Seattle area, Naval Hospital Bremerton evacuated

By the Navy News Service and NAVHOSP Bremerton public affairs

SEATTLE (NNS) — Naval Hospital Bremerton, about 20 miles southwest of Seattle, sustained some structural damage and evacuated its non-essential staff after it was hit by a strong earthquake on Feb. 28, shortly before 11 a.m. PST. No injuries were reported among the hospital's staff or patients.

The 40-second quake registered 6.8 on the Richter Scale and was centered about 11 miles northeast of Olympia.

All non-essential staff, ambulatory patients in the hospital for clinic visits, and

some inpatients were evacuated immediately.

Patients who could be moved safely but needed follow-on care were transported to the naval hospital's fleet hospital training site. This tent structure hospital, designed for patient care on the battlefield, became an indispensable aid in emergency patient care and showed little damage.

"Our staff mobilized additional supplies rapidly to make the fleet hospital fully operational, and patients were very comfortable with their care

throughout the process," said the hospital's commanding officer, Capt. Christine Hunter.

"The tent structure is actually safer than a fixed facility," said Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman Yen Dubarek, command senior chief of the fleet hospital. "We had no damage out there, it just sways."

Fifteen patients were cared for in the tent hospital.

Eighteen patients who were on the inpatient and obstetrics wards and the Intensive Care Unit were not moved.

"All essential support

systems were functioning and we did not want to move them unnecessarily. Reports were indicating that there was little likelihood of further aftershocks, so we assumed that responsibility," said Capt. Dan Snyder, the hospital's executive officer.

Snyder added, "I want to commend the entire crew. They moved quickly to initiate the disaster plan, moved all non-essential personnel from the building without panic, quickly stood up the fleet hospital's alternative triage, operating

See Quake, page 5

USS Shreveport takes reenlistment "center court"

By Lt. j.g. K.C. Choi, NR Information Bureau 206 for Surface Force, Atlantic public affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) — Eight Sailors from USS *Shreveport* (LPD 12) were given VIP treatment as they concluded their reenlistment celebration on center court at Washington's MCI Center, Feb. 24. The swearing-in ceremony was conducted prior to a basketball game between the Washington Wizards and the Toronto Raptors and was part of an all-day extravaganza for the reenlistees.

"Today was our way of showing our Sailors the importance of their dedication to the Navy. We wanted to make them feel like heroes — because they are," said Capt. William D. Valentine Jr., commanding officer of USS *Shreveport*.

The following Sailors were sworn in: Machinist's Mate 3rd

Class Rejonski L. Anderson, Memphis, Tenn.; Quartermaster 3rd Class Stephen Atwood, Pensacola, Fla.; Operations Specialist 3rd Class Erick Bittony, Thoreau, N.M.; Electronics Technician 2nd Class Vincent Dasaro, Everett, Mass.; Aviation Boatswain's Mate(fuels) 2nd Class Jerry A. Dupree, Blenheim, S.C.; Fire Controlman 2nd Class Matthew S. Kazee, Xenia, Ohio; Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Darryl L. Mixon, Selma, Ala.; and Chief Navy Counselor Royal Parker, Mobile, Ala.

The Sailors, along with their families and friends, were treated to a whole day in Washington, D.C. Sailors and guests were transported from Norfolk to Washington, D.C.,

via charter bus, and began their day with lunch at ESPNZone. Each Sailor was given a commemorative box containing a reenlistment flag, plaque and benefit book. Prior to the enlistment ceremony and the game, all were given the opportunity to see the sights of the nation's capital.

Sailors had a variety of reasons for reenlisting. Bittony, the youngest enlistee, enjoyed the traveling and wishes to take advantage of the opportunity to see the world. Other Sailors were interested in taking advantage of educational benefits, working with different people and mentoring others.

"I like the work that I do, the challenges I face, the adventure and the opportunity to meet new people," said

Dupree, who is a 3rd time enlistee. "My family has been fully supportive of my decision and has played an important role in the process."

Valentine spearheaded the development of the event in an effort to give Sailors a memorable experience. Previous reenlistment ceremonies were held on board USS *Constitution* in Boston, Mass., where 46 Sailors reenlisted, and in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., where 11 Sailors reenlisted.

"USS *Shreveport* has a great record in getting Sailors to reenlist. These special reenlistment events are an excellent way for us to thank our Sailors for the work that they do and to make them realize how important they are," said Parker.

JCS chairman visits USS *Harry S. Truman* team on maiden deployment in the Gulf

By Journalist 1st Class(SW) Joel Huval, USS *Harry S. Truman* public affairs

USS *HARRY S. TRUMAN*, At Sea (NNS) — Army Gen. Henry H. Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) March 1 to address the important role the carrier's Sailors and Marines play while forward-deployed to the Persian Gulf in support of Operation Southern Watch.

During the introduction before a hangar bay crowded with a few thousand Sailors and Marines, Rear Adm. James McArthur, commander of Carrier Group 2, highlighted Shelton's career and expressed his delight in the general's visit.

"It's a pleasure to have him aboard," McArthur said. "He is the biggest supporter of both the military and their families. He initiated, and powered through Washington, last year's pay increase (the biggest in nearly 10 years). He knows how hard you work and the sacrifices you make. I'm grateful to have him aboard."

A 38-year veteran, including Vietnam and the Persian Gulf War, Shelton took center stage and began his address.

"This (ship) truly epitomizes (the phrase) that 'this is where the buck stops,'" he began. "The Truman Team epitomizes American strength and the strength America has going into any region."

Shelton continued, "There is no other place in the world where I feel like what we do is more vital to American efforts than when I am in the (Persian Gulf) with you. What you do here is vital to America's national interest. The world economy hinges on this region. America's economy hinges on this region. We have to be here in strength...to make sure those who want to be opportunistic with expansionism ideals won't be able to do so."

"Because of the strength you keep here," Shelton said, "America is ensuring the stability of this region...you are the muscle of American foreign policy in this region. You are ensuring Saddam Hussein cannot recreate a war machine — his



Gen. Henry Shelton, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, addresses the Sailors and Marines of USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75).

Photo by Photographer's Mate 3rd Class Justin E. Bane

ultimate goal — through daily enforcement of the No Fly Zone."

Following his address, he answered several questions from the audience ranging from next year's pay increase to allowing family members to use Montgomery GI bill funds.

"Our priorities in Washington are to continue to keep an emphasis on maintaining the great quality force we have," Shelton noted. "In spite of the great technology that we have, despite the great aircraft and tanks, the real strength, despite everything else, is you. It's the quality of the people. We want to maintain that quality by taking care of you and your families, and we know that it's not the money that motivates you — we could never pay you enough. Every service member needs adequate healthcare and adequate housing. We foresee, with President Bush's support, another pay raise next year and want to keep the momentum going in the future."

"I'm proud to be here on your maiden deployment," Shelton said during his closing comments. "It takes a lot of pieces working together to make this ship great...this ship is America's great strength because of each individual serving on this ship."

Before leaving the carrier, Shelton enjoyed lunch with several Sailors and Marines, getting a first-hand look at the carrier's award-winning mess decks.

One of the Sailors who attended the luncheon was Information Technician Systems Seaman Jillian Rodriguez, a Long Island, N.Y., native. Rodriguez said the group was a bit awe-inspired by Shelton.

"He had to break the ice," Rodriguez said. "He asked us what we thought could be improved. The biggest issue brought up was finding ways to increase incentives to keep people in (past their first enlistment). He said the military is always looking to find more ways to keep us in."

Quake, con't. from pg. 3

room and emergency treatment areas and calmed and cared for our outpatients and staff members in a professional and compassionate manner. As soon as we were determined to be structurally sound, the crew began clean-up procedures and then provided the full scope of services throughout the night and prepared us for full operations."

No significant damage was reported from any of the other Navy bases in the Pacific Northwest Region.

"The bases, the ships and piers are all OK," said Lt. Kim Marks, assistant public affairs officer for Navy Region Northwest in Seattle. "Just some cracks in the pavement on base. Nothing else."

Marks added that members were released from work early after the quake to go home and check on their

families and personal belongings.

Elsewhere, one person was reported killed, 168 were injured. The earthquake was felt as far east as Utah. The quake also cracked the Capitol dome in Washington's state capital, Olympia.

Seismologists said that the epicenter was about 30 miles underground, which prevented more widespread damage. The entire Pacific Northwest region is earthquake-prone, scientists said, because it sits on a geological plate that has another one "diving" under it. The Juan de Fuca plate pushes in from the Pacific and under the North American plate. The quakes happen when one of the plates ruptures under the stress.

The last time this area experienced an earthquake of this magnitude was in November 1949 when a 7.0 quake hit the area.

Navy/Marine Corps News

Look for the following stories and more on next week's Navy/Marine Corps News show:

- President Bush and former first lady Nancy Reagan christen the aircraft carrier PCU *Ronald Reagan* (CVN 76) in Norfolk, Va.;

- The USS *Constellation* (CV 64) Battle Group heads out for a joint task force exercise as it prepares for deployment;

- The Korean American Cultural Foundation tours the United States, thanking American veterans of the Korean War;

- Sailors aboard USS *Enterprise* (CVN 65) get a special visit from some legendary aviators.

Compiled on tape #2001-11, the show is on its way to the fleet now.

In naval history: March 12, 1956

Attack Squadron 83, the first aircraft squadron to be equipped with air-to-air missiles, deployed to the Mediterranean Sea on this date aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Intrepid* (CVA 11). The unit was made up of F-8 Crusaders that carried Sparrow missiles.

Years later, after having served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam, USS *Intrepid* was transferred to the Intrepid Museum Foundation of New York City in April 1981 as a sea-air-space museum.

Visit the Naval Historical Center web site at www.history.navy.mil for more information about naval history.



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Rendering honors



The honor guard aboard auxiliary command ship USS *LaSalle* (AGF 3) fires a volley of rounds into the air as part of a 21-gun salute during a burial at sea. The ceremony was held to honor a crewmember's father who served in the U.S. Army during the 1960's.

Photo by Journalist 2nd Class Jeremy Brooks